

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3491

S E C R E T MADRID 7619

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XDGS 1

TAGS: PFOR, SS, SP

SUBJECT: JUAN CARLOS VISIT TO SAHARA

REF: MADRID 7618

1. CORTINA MADE NO MENTION TO ME EARLIER TODAY OF JUAN CARLOS' VISIT TO SAHARA. WHEN THIS VISIT WAS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THIS AFTERNOON I CALLED CORTINA TO ASK HIM ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IT IN LIGHT OF WHAT HE HAD TOLD ME EARLIER.

2. CORTINA STATED THAT JUAN CARLOS' VISIT SHOULD BE SEEN AS "ACT OF PRESENCE" OF ACTING CHIEF OF STATE WITH SPANISH ARMED FORCES IN SAHARA. HE RECALLED WHAT HE HAD SAID EARLIER REGARDING ORDERS TO SPANISH FORCES TO RESIST MOROCCAN ENTRY INTO TERRITORY WHICH IS UNDER SPANISH ADMINISTRATION. HE EXPECTED JUAN CARLOS WOULD REMAIN ONLY VERY BRIEFLY IN SAHARA, POSSIBLY RETURNING TO MADRID AS EARLY AS TONIGHT.

3. CORTINA STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT VISIT OF JUAN CARLOS WAS NOT A COVER FOR A MEETING WITH HASSAN. SPAIN REMAINED READY TO NEGOTIATE, BUT NOT ON THE "TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT" TERMS ON WHICH MOROCCO NOW INSISTS. FINALLY, CORTINA EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER REPORTED PRESENCE OF HASSAN IN AGADIR AND PUBLIC INDICATIONS THAT HE WILL LEAD MARCH.

4. COMMENT: FROM MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SOURCES, WE UNDERSTAND SPANISH HAVE CREATED BUFFER ZONE OF ABOUT 30 KILOMETERS BETWEEN

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MOROCCAN BORDER AND THE LINE IN SAHARA BEYOND WHICH SPANISH

DO NOT INTEND TO LET MOROCCANS PASS. OBVIOUSLY GOS WOULD
PREFER THAT MARCH BE HALTED BEFORE IT EVEN REACHES BORDER.
STABLER

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